

Message Text

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UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 PALERMO 0430

BRUSSELS FOR USEEC

DEPARTMENT PASS ERDA, USIA AND FEDERAL ENERGY ADMINISTRATION

MILAN PASS TRADE CENTER

AMEMBASSY ROME PASS USIS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, TECH, ENERG, IT

SUBJECT: PALERMO SOLAR ENERGY CONFERENCE EXPOSITION

REF: A. PALERMO 0259 B. PALERMO 0364 (NOTAL)

C. PALERMO 0365 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: PALERMO'S MEDITERRANEAN FAIR FEATURED SOLAR ENERGY
EXPOSITION FOR FIRST TIME AND CLOSED WITH HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL
TWO-DAY INTERNATIONAL SOLAR ENERGY CONFERENCE.
LATTER EVENT BROUGHT LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN SOLAR ENERGY
TECHNOLOGY AND APPLICATION TO HIGH LEVEL AUDIENCE OF GOVERNMENT
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AND MILITARY OFFICIALS, SCIENTISTS, ACADEMICS, ENGINEERS AND
BUSINESSMEN. EXTENSIVE, HIGHLY FAVORABLE PRESS COVERAGE NOTED
CONGEN'S ROLE IN ORGANIZING EVENT AND ARRANGING FOR U.S. PARTICI-
PANTS. WE ARE PARTICULARLY GRATEFUL TO USEC/ERDA'S MR. PURPLE
FOR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION AND TO USIA/USIS ROME FOR PUBLIC
RELATIONS AND LOGISTICAL BACKSTOPPING. END SUMMARY.

1. SINCE FIRST PALERMO SOLAR ENERGY SEMINAR IN DECEMBER 1975, (PALERMO 0856 OF DECEMBER 30, 1975) WE HAVE SOUGHT NEW OPPORTUNITIES TO KEEP THIS VITAL SUBJECT BEFORE SICILIAN AUDIENCE. LATEST EFFORT - IN WHICH WE COLLABORATED WITH LOCAL BUILDING CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION, INDUSTRY FEDERATION, OTHER GOVERNMENT AND BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS - CULMINATED IN HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL EXPOSITION/CONFERENCE LINKED TO MAY 28-JUNE 12 MEDITERRANEAN FAIR AT PALERMO FAIRGROUNDS. WE NOTE, PARENTHETICALLY, THAT FAIR OPENED WITH U.S.-SPONSORED SEMINAR ON AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION WHICH, COUPLED WITH SOLAR ENERGY EVENT, GUARANTEED LOW-COST HIGHLY VISIBLE U.S. PRESENCE THROUGHOUT ENTIRE FAIR PERIOD.

2. FOR FIRST TIME, MEDITERRANEAN FAIR AUTHORITIES DEVOTED MAJOR ATTENTION TO SOLAR ENERGY AND DEDICATED NEW FAIRGROUND FACILITIES TO COMMERCIAL SOLAR ENERGY DISPLAYS. DESPITE SHORT LEAD-TIME PERMITTED BY FAIR SCHEDULE, MOST FIRMS - INCLUDING TWO SICILIAN MANUFACTURERS - LISTED PARA. 4, REF. A, PARTICIPATED WITH DISPLAY ITEMS, SOLAR ENERGY DEVICES, ETC. PRODUCTS DISPLAYED TENDED TOWARD LOW-TECHNOLOGY ITEMS, I.E. SOLAR PANELS/COLLECTORS. GIVEN ACTIVE INTEREST GENERATED BY EXPOSITION, WE BELIEVE THAT HIGHER U.S. TECHNOLOGY IN VISUAL AND/OR PRODUCT DISPLAYS WOULD HAVE FOUND RECEPTIVE AUDIENCE. WE UNDERSTAND THAT SOLAR ENERGY WILL BE PERMANENT FEATURE OF FUTURE MEDITERRANEAN FAIRS, AND THEREFORE BELIEVE COMMERCE MIGHT BEGIN THINKING NOT ABOUT ALERTING U.S. SOLAR ENERGY INDUSTRY TO ABOVE POSSIBILITY FOR 1978.

DAVID W. DOYLE OF INTER-TECHNOLOGY CORPORATION, WHO PARTICIPATED IN CONFERENCE, HAS AGREED WITH THIS ASSESSMENT OF FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES AND EXPECTS TO HAVE HIS CORPORATION PARTICIPATE NEXT YEAR.

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3. JUNE 10-11 SOLAR ENERGY CONFERENCE WAS PRECEDED BY WELL-ATTENDED JUNE 8 MEETING WITH PRESS STAGED BY ORGANIZING COMMITTEE (INCLUDING CONGEN), AND BY JUNE 9 SESSION AT SICILIAN INDUSTRY FEDERATION AT WHICH U.S. CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS CONSULTED DIRECTLY WITH ITALIAN LEADERS IN SOLAR ENERGY INDUSTRY. MEETING, ABLY INTERPRETED BY CONGEN'S COMMERCIAL SPECIALIST, LASTED THREE HOURS AND EXPOSED BOTH SIDES TO LATEST SOLAR ENERGY RESEARCH DEVELOPMENTS AND PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS.

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RUFHOM/AMCONSUL TURIN 0035

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4. CEREMONIES OPENING TWO-DAY CONFERENCE WERE ATTENDED BY LARGE NUMBER OF SENIOR LOCAL OFFICIALS (3 REGIONAL GOVERNMENT ASSESSORS, PRESIDENT OF SICILIAN AGRICULTURAL AGENCY, CONSULAR REPRESENTATIVES, SENIOR MILITARY OFFICERS, ETC.).

5. WITH MINOR CHANGES, TWO-DAY CYCLE OF SPEAKERS AND SUBJECTS REMAINED AS REPORTED REF. B. INTENSIVE DISCUSSIONS PROMPTED PRESENTATIONS BY OFF-ROSTER PARTICIPANTS WHO OFFERED ADDITIONAL RESEARCH INSIGHTS, RESULTS, ETC.

AUDIENCE NUMBERS RANGED FROM 350 AT OPENING SESSION TO 100 AT 8 P.M. CLOSING, SATURDAY EVENING, AFTER TWO DAYS OF DISCUSSION HEATED BOTH BY ENTHUSIASM FOR SUBJECT MATTER AND ABSENCE OF AIR-CONDITIONING. AVERAGE ATTENDED FOR ENTIRE CONFERENCE RANGED FROM 200 TO 250. IN ADDITION, QUALITY WAS HIGH WITH LARGE NUMBER OF LEADING ACADEMIC AND INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH PERSONNEL, REPRESENTATIVES FOR ALTERNATE ENERGY INDUSTRIES, GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, ARCHITECTS, ENGINEERS, HIGH SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY STUDENTS, ETC.

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AUDIENCE NUMBERS AND QUALITY WERE ALSO HIGH FOR USIS-PROJECTED FILMS, "SOLAR GENERATION" AND "RENDEZVOUS WITH THE SUN", WHICH WERE SHOWN DURING CONFERENCE INTERMISSIONS.

6. LEAD U.S. PRESENTATION WAS MADE BY USEC/ERDA'S MR. ROBERT PURPLE WHO GAVE IMPRESSIVE SYNOPSIS OF CURRENT USG EFFORTS IN SOLAR ENERGY. PRESIDENT CARTER'S COMMITMENT TO ALTERNATE ENERGY RESEARCH/ IMPLEMENTATION AND HIGH LEVEL OF USG FUNDING IN THESE FIELDS WERE

HIGHLIGHTED IN PURPLE'S REMARKS AND WERE FREQUENTLY CITED BY SUBSEQUENT SPEAKERS. REMARKS BY HAROLD HAY, OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOLAR ENERGY SOCIETY, ON SOLAR ENERGY APPLICATIONS IN AGRICULTURE AND ON "PASSIVE" SOLAR ENERGY TECHNIQUES, AND BY MR. DOYLE ON SOLAR APPLICATIONS IN THE BUILDING INDUSTRY WERE ALSO CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS. THE FACT THAT SICILIAN ORGANIZERS PAID TRAVEL AND HONORARIUM FEES FOR PARTICIPATION BY HAY AND DOYLE REFLECTED HIGH LEVEL OF LOCAL INTEREST IN U.S. SOLAR ENERGY DEVELOPMENTS. WE ARE EXTREMELY GRATEFUL TO ERDA FOR FUNDING MR. PURPLE'S PARTICIPATION AND TO ALL THREE U.S. PARTICIPANTS FOR THEIR EXCELLENT PRESENTATIONS.

7. IN ADDITION TO THEIR PARTICIPATION IN CONFERENCE, BOTH HAY AND DOYLE MADE NUMEROUS CONTACTS OF POTENTIAL COMMERCIAL INTEREST. HAY, WHO ALSO SERVES AS PRESIDENT OF SKYTHERN CORPORATION, CITED SEVERAL POSSIBILITIES FOR HIS SERVICES AS SOLAR CONSULTANT, AND DOYLE MADE CLOSE CONTACT WITH IMPORTANT RENDO BUSINESS GROUP WITH INTEREST IN BROAD RANGE OF SOLAR APPLICATIONS. ANY BUSINESS GENERATED CAN ONLY BE A PLUS GIVEN FACT THAT LOCAL FIRMS/ORGANIZERS FINANCED HAY AND DOYLE PARTICIPATION.

8. COMMENT: GIVEN CURRENT U.S. EMPHASIS ON ENERGY AND FUTURE PROSPECTS CITED PARA. 2, COMMERCE MAY WISH GIVE COVERAGE TO ABOVE EVENT IN "COMMERCE AMERICA". WE WOULD GLADLY FURNISH FURTHER DETAILS, PHOTOS, IF THEY WOULD BE HELPFUL. COLLINS

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